

within the proposed salary adjustments appears to be a fair and reasonable solution to helping us retain our dedicated conservation officers. The advantages of a longevity increase to keep experienced conservation officers would far outweigh of having them replaced with new recruits. I went into detail the other day listing the nature and the definition of the work of the conservation officers. They are of the same pay grade. They work fifty hours, the same as the peace officers. Forty percent of their time they are facing people that do carry guns and I don't want to go into detail and list again, but some of the main things--they assist in riot control and training, they enforce all laws, regulations in our state park system, they conduct and give programs for groups, churches and civic organizations, they assist in riot control and training, they teach hunter safety in schools and clubs, then attend law enforcement schools and workshops, they enforce all laws pertaining to management and protection of wildlife, all boating laws, regulations in our state park system, all pollution problems, make prompt investigation of arrest for all violations pertaining to the protection of our wildlife, boating and parks. They work a fifty hour week which includes weekends and holidays and mainly they are on call for twenty four hours a day to receive calls pertaining to illegal hunting and for assistance from other law enforcement officers and agencies. By state statutes a conventional conservation officer of the Games and Parks Commission is classified as a peace officer. New officers spend six months on the job training in the field with an experienced conservation officer. They patrol in the state parks and make arrests for the possession of drugs. Now to me, the duties are similar to a state patrol officer. I think the longevity pay is needed. Okay. The \$2,000 comes out of the Game fund and approximately, I mean \$2,000 comes out of the general fund and \$29,144 out of the Games and Parks Commission fund. I urge the members of this Legislature to vote against Senator Warner's proposal to strike the amendment that was passed the other day for longevity pay for the conservation officers. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Cope.

SENATOR COPE: Mr. President, members, I would support Senator Warner's proposal to eliminate this longevity pay. Remember this, fellow Senators. We're opening up Pandora's box. There isn't a single agency in the State of Nebraska but what have a perfect right to come in and ask for this same longevity pay. Now if we're going to do it statewide, that's a different story, but I think that's going to take a lot of study and careful, careful consideration. Remember too, this is a continuing tax, paid for by tax I should say. What will it be like twenty years from now or thirty years from now? It's difficult to say. Senator Labeledz makes a good selling point when she says that \$2,000 is all that's coming out of general fund. That's true. The \$29,000 that's coming out of the Game and Parks though, remember could be used for the improvement of facilities of the Game and Parks and eliminate some of the general fund money or use the general fund money somewhere else, so we're talking about \$31,000 plus dollars that is actually the same as general fund. So consider it carefully. This is opening Pandora's box and it is going to come back and haunt us every session of the Legislature from now on.

PRESIDENT: Senator Barnett.